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Devoted to Universal Liberty.

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For the True American.

Slavery is Sinful.

NO. XIII.

Slavery, as we have shown, is a sin against God, and against man.

The remedy is emancipation. In this, as in every other sin, we must abandon it. If it be asked, when? Then I answer as Wayland did: "When is it our duty to obey God?" or cease sinning? To this there can be but one answer; and that is, immediately. No man who desires the favor of his God, dare do otherwise.

A reason that would be sufficient for delaying to obey God for a moment, would be a sufficient reason for disobeying him forever."

Said Judge Reid (who is the present judge of our district,) "When you are convinced that slavery is the greatest political evil," (even political evil) "whether sinful against high Heaven or not, set your free, let others do as they will."

"You will gain some credit by proving your faith by your works. But to be talking about going with the North (that is for emancipation) without moving a step towards accomplishing it,—you cannot even deceive the negroes themselves."

All men, like Judge Reid, know that whenever we see a thing to be sinful, or even "the greatest political evil," we ought to repent of it immediately, and "bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

Why, dear reader, if adultery, and theft, and counterfeiting, were as publicly and extensively practiced, both in the Church and out of the Church, as slavery is, what would you think of a man who would preach the gradual abolition of such vices,—pleading that some have no other way to get their living—that the hands of some are too tender to work—and others are too old to work—and many have received these sins from their fathers, or friends, by will and inheritance—and above all, here is the law of the land, (made by men of like passions with ourselves) it sanctions these practices as right; and with all these considerations, I think we might continue in these practices for a while, any how."

You would deem such an one as worthy only of the execrations of man, and the direct vengeance of Almighty God.

But do you object, and say it is not self, it is not interest that keeps me from emancipating him immediately; I am looking at the good of the slave, and society.

First, to be sure that you are really honest with yourself in saying, "I am looking at the good of the slave, and society." Known men, when their objections were shown to be false, and their difficulties removed, and they pressed to do duty, who have obstinately refused to quit their sin, and like the young man who came to the Savior inquiring duty, and went away sorrowing because he had possessions, Matt. 19: 22—it was self, it was covetousness, that hindered and deceived him.

Second, you are not left to the privilege of saying, it will be better to quit sin gradually; for Almighty God, your Judge, requires immediate repentance for all sin.

But let us examine your objection. You say they are not fit for freedom, and it would be better for them, and society, not to have it now.

If they are unfit for freedom, then, I ask, what has kept them from not being fit for freedom as other men? Your only answer is, slavery. Now if slavery unfits them for freedom, when will they become fit for freedom, whilst you keep them in slavery? Will you plead their unfitness for freedom as a reason why you may continue in sin, and yet continue to practice the very thing you say unfits them for freedom? You are, my dear reader, according to your own showing, chargeable with double guilt. You not only rob the slave of his liberty, but practice that upon him which you say unfits him for his liberty. If you say they should not enjoy freedom because they are not educated, then on the same ground you may enslave 300,000 white men in the south, who are not educated—who are over 20 years of age and cannot read or write.

This best way to fit men for freedom, and make them safe for society, is, to give them their liberty and treat them as men, and not as beasts. This position we will support with good reasons and facts.

When you give a man his liberty, and treat him as a man, you immediately invest him with a character—a character dear to him as life; a character which he will sustain, prompted by the principle of love of approbation, implanted in his nature.

If you reward him for his labor, he will have another incentive to industry, virtue and economy. If you respect all his rights, then he will have need of, and a desire for, knowledge and virtue. He will make efforts to obtain them. To treat man thus, is the most natural and effective way to fit him for the duties of a freeman. Facts proving it. Take as an example the emancipation given in the West India Islands. There slavery existed for many long years; and, as it always has been, it became a great evil to the master and the slave. The people and the government became convinced of it, and determined to emancipate. Two of the Islands emancipated immediately, the rest adopted a gradual system—an apprentice system of six years. After the elapse of two years, finding that those who had emancipated immediately, both master and former slaves, were doing infinitely better than they who were gradually ceasing to do evil, the rest with one accord, emancipated on the morning of the 1st of August, 1834. Thenceforward the scene on one of the Islands. "When the hour of 12 approached, the missionary proposed that they should all kneel down and take the oath of freedom in silence. Accord-

ingly, as the loud bell tolled its first note, the crowded assembly prostrated themselves on their knees. All was silent, save the quivering, half stifled breath of the struggling spirit. The slow notes of the clock fell upon the multitude, peal on peal, peal on peal rolled over the prostrated throng in tones of angelic voices, thrilling among the desolate chords and weary heart-strings. Searched had the clock sounded the last note, when the lightning flashed vividly around, and a loud peal of thunder roared along the sky—God's pillar of fire, and his trumpet of jubilee.

A moment of profound silence passed—then came the burst—they broke forth in prayers, they shouted, they sang glory, hallelujah; they clapped their hands, leaped up, fell down, clasped each other in their free arms, laughed, cried, went to and fro tossing up their unfettered hands. Above all, in broken dialect, was heard the utterings of gratitude to God. "Yes, with gratitude to God. There was no danger of insurrection then. The feelings of revenge were all lost in the ocean of love that filled the soul. Filled with gratitude to their masters and friends for the precious love of liberty, insurrection was the last thought that could come into their minds. And so would it be in Kentucky, if the shackles were struck off of every slave on to-morrow morning. If I do a man an act of kindness, I reasonably expect that he in return, will be kind to me. To talk otherwise, is to talk against reason, and well known facts. The African is not insensible to gratitude for favors bestowed. Every man who knows anything about them, knows that they are as proverbial for gratitude for favors bestowed, as Frenchmen for urbanity, and sociability.

They are submissive to government. So true is this that it was one of the considerations which prompted Las Casas to recommend to cardinal Ximenes, the introduction of the African into Hispaniola, instead of the Indian, as laborers.

It is notorious that they are humble and submissive above all men. So true is this, that some even plead this fact as a reason why they ought to be enslaved—saying, that God designed them to be slaves. Now will any man who expects to be credited, talk of insurrection and danger in view of these well known facts?

Now what would I infer to be true, is proved by facts. We shall show that the pecuniary, physical, intellectual, and moral condition of both master and slave—white and black,—are infinitely improved by immediate emancipation. We shall add testimony of such a character as to leave no ground for doubt.

The French Royal Commission, presided over by the duke of Broglie, states—"for eight years past emancipation has been proclaimed in the slave colonies of Great Britain. These colonies are nineteen in number, and contain 800,000 negroes: * * * under the influence of various climates, and of social and political circumstances, the different emancipation took place every where, in 1834, and has continued since that time, without fear of contradiction, that an event so formidable at first sight as the summons of 800,000 slaves to liberty, on the same day, at the same hour, has not caused in eight years, in all the English colonies, the tenth part of the troubles that are ordinarily caused among the most civilized nations of Europe, by the least political question that agitates, however little, the public mind."

"Rapport fait au Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine et des colonies." Quoted from an address sent by the committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, to those countries of Europe that possess slave colonies.

The same committee state: "The English apprenticeship, which in its provisions appeared to offer better guarantees for the protection of the semi-bondsman, than any code of slavery with which we are acquainted, utterly failed of securing those advantages which it promised. Reason and experience alike demonstrate, that no measure short of perfect freedom, and equal laws, can enable man to protect himself against oppression, and to secure his just interests."

In the British House of Lords, Nov. 23, 1837, Lord Brougham said of Antigua, (one of the Islands that emancipated immediately,) that property in that Island had risen in value—exports of sugar had increased—offences of all sorts, from capital offences downwards, had decreased, as appeared from returns sent to the governor of the colony.

The Governor himself said: "The planters all concede that emancipation has been a great blessing, and he did not know of a single individual who wanted to return to the old system." See Six Month's Tour of Thorne and Kimball in the West Indies.

In the year 1837 Joseph Sturge, Thomas Hervey, Dr. Lloyd, and John Scoble of England, went to the West Indies for the express purpose of examining into the condition of the emancipated slaves, and they state: "Our opportunities of personal observation were extensive. We had the privilege of free communication with the most intelligent and influential persons in the colony. There is one subject upon which all are agreed—that the experiment of abolition has succeeded beyond the expectation of its most sanguine advocates.

The measure has been felt to be one of emancipation of masters as well as of slaves. The average cost of cultivation is believed to be one-fifth, or one-sixth less than formerly, so that free labor is manifestly advantageous. Houses and lands have risen in value. Estates are now worth as much as they were formerly with their slaves attached to them" (so it would be in Kentucky were emancipation to take place—no pecuniary loss). "There has been an augmentation of the import trade of the Island."

Testimony of twenty-four Wesleyan Missionaries, assembled at St. Johns, Antigua, Feb. 7, 1837, they state: 1. "The emancipation of the slaves of the West Indies, while it was an act of undoubted justice to that oppressed people, has operated most favorably in furthering the triumphs of the gospel among the negroes, * * * and in its operations as a stimulus to proprietors and other influential gentlemen, to encourage religious education and the wide dissemination of the scriptures, as an incentive to industry and good order."

2 That while the above statements are true with reference to all the Islands, even where the system of apprenticeship prevails, they are especially applicable to An-

tigua, where the results of the great measure of entire freedom, so humanely and judiciously granted by the Legislature, cannot be contemplated without the most devout thanksgiving to Almighty God."

Here is the testimony of the council of a disinterested nation—of the Governor of the Island,—of one of the first statesmen of Britain,—of travellers,—of resident planters, and of Missionaries, who travel from place to place, and mingle with the people. They testify that emancipation on the soil, and immediate, has been a blessing to both master and slave—that crime has diminished—that peace and order prevail—that morals and religion are greatly improved—that property has arisen in value—that cultivation is cheaper—that products are greater—that morals and religion has been greatly improved—that man has been blessed, and God glorified. Pause a while, reader, until you fix these facts in your mind. But does any one object and say they have to import laborers into some of the Islands to cultivate the soil. I answer, 'tis true they have done so; and there are reasons for it—reasons why I do not in the least militate against emancipation.

1. The women now being wives, and with their husbands, the owners of houses and property are employed in their families with domestic cares, as they should be, and as God designed them. By consequence, the number of field hands are diminished.

But suppose there is a demand for more laborers, by the women being in their appropriate places—Then (1.) There will be employment for some good honest free laborer, who will come if the employer will give a fair compensation and treat him aright. Labor, like trade, will go where there is a demand and proper treatment.

(2.) It is better for the master to do right to his God—his fellow-man—his country, and suffer, for the present, some momentary inconvenience,—some loss of expensive hands,—than to sin against his God, wrong his fellow-man, and injure the markets, trade, and general prosperity of his country.

Further: if the master has any claims to philanthropy, he should consider that those wives, husbands, and children, have interests, rights, and conveniences, which should be regarded as well as his own. In the scale of humanity, and of christianity, the convenience, the interest, the rights of one man and his family are as great and as heavy as those of any other. The rights of man, the good of a country, and the glory of God, should never be sacrificed to a little momentary covetousness of the few.

Second reason why some Islands have had to import laborers.

Some of the men who were emancipated have bought small parcels of land, and the cultivation of this, with the improvement of houses, &c., occupy much, and in some cases, all of their time. Some, also, have gone to trades. This division of labor, this division of duties, and employments, whilst it diminishes the number of laborers of general good for momentary ease. It is the spirit of Christ, who was willing to toil that he might save a world, and afterward enjoy the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Does any person believe that any of the troops, raised by virtue of our act of war, can reach the Rio Grande before the fate of our army will be decided for good or evil? The collision between our forces and those of Mexico took place on the 24th of April, and the subject was brought before us on the 11th of May, seventeen days after the event. We could not expect that the subject would be disposed of here under two or three days, and the intelligence of our action could not reach Gen. Taylor before the last of May, some thirty-five days after the first collision. It is also manifest that volunteers could not be raised, organized, and sent to the scene of action before the middle of June. Some six or eight weeks must elapse, before the troops raised by our act, could reach General Taylor's camp. How, then, can it be pretended that our action could have any reference to the immediate condition of our army? From the facts submitted by General Taylor, it appears to be certain that the fate of his army must be decided for good or for evil within a short time. The Commanding General also informs us that he had, in virtue of authority reposed in him, called upon the States of Texas and Louisiana for 5000 men and he had authority to call upon several other States.

The call for these troops was made on the 29th of April, and would reach the authorities of those States ten or twelve days before the intelligence of the collision reached us. These troops would be sent irrespective of any action by this body, and it is upon them and others, which he was authorized to call for, that General Taylor must depend. It is not true, therefore, that the fate of our army depended upon any action of ours. Our army had reference, not to the immediate fate of the army, but to the future operation of that army. It was a question not of immediate success to our own troops, but of the conquest of Mexico. This was in fact the question which the fate of his army must be decided for good or for evil within a short time. The Commanding General also informs us that he had, in virtue of authority reposed in him, called upon the States of Texas and Louisiana for 5000 men and he had authority to call upon several other States.

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fair compensation for labor, and treat the laborer right, have laborers in abundance—refuse applications by scores, and are infinitely more prosperous than they were when slavery existed.

Correct principles always work well where men do their duty.

But, does some one say: "the people in our free States, where these causes do not exist, have trouble in procuring help?" To this we reply:

1. They have not the trouble and inconvenience that we have, with our hunting, buying, selling, scolding, whipping, driving—with slothful, unskillful, wasteful laborers—want of schools, churches, arts, sciences, towns, markets—in a word, general want of individual comfort—social and national prosperity—with constant fear of insurrection, and foreign interference.

2. Whether they have inconvenience or not, they get along much faster and more happy than we do. They are our superiors in wealth, education, arts, sciences, morals, and State prosperity.

3. It is not better that a few masters should suffer a small inconvenience, rather than three millions of our fellow-beings should suffer inconveniences a thousand fold greater, and the robbery of their dearest rights? As we have said, in the scale of humanity and christianity, the convenience of one man and his family is as great as that of any other. And the man that will obey Christ's command, in "loving his neighbor as himself," will feel so. "Charity seeketh not her own." Again, the slaveholders, (who in our State are six to one) suffer a great inconvenience in getting free laborers; because slavery makes labor disreputable, and keeps away the free laborer. Is it not better that one should suffer, in common with others, a little inconvenience for a while, than that six should suffer a greater inconvenience,—an inconvenience which they must continue to feel as long as slavery exists?

Lastly, who is willing, at the peril of his soul's salvation, to practise a manifest sin against his God, his fellow man, and his country, rather than suffer a little temporal inconvenience?

The above objection is very common in our country. Let the friends of humanity and justice be active in showing its true character. It will sacrifice right to the general good for momentary ease. It is the spirit of Christ, who was willing to toil that he might save a world, and afterward enjoy the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Does any person believe that any of the troops, raised by virtue of our act of war, can reach the Rio Grande before the fate of our army will be decided for good or evil? The collision between our forces and those of Mexico took place on the 24th of April, and the subject was brought before us on the 11th of May, seventeen days after the event. We could not expect that the subject would be disposed of here under two or three days, and the intelligence of our action could not reach Gen. Taylor before the last of May, some thirty-five days after the first collision. It is also manifest that volunteers could not be raised, organized, and sent to the scene of action before the middle of June. Some six or eight weeks must elapse, before the troops raised by our act, could reach General Taylor's camp. How, then, can it be pretended that our action could have any reference to the immediate condition of our army? From the facts submitted by General Taylor, it appears to be certain that the fate of his army must be decided for good or for evil within a short time. The Commanding General also informs us that he had, in virtue of authority reposed in him, called upon the States of Texas and Louisiana for 5000 men and he had authority to call upon several other States.

The call for these troops was made on the 29th of April, and would reach the authorities of those States ten or twelve days before the intelligence of the collision reached us. These troops would be sent irrespective of any action by this body, and it is upon them and others, which he was authorized to call for, that General Taylor must depend. It is not true, therefore, that the fate of our army depended upon any action of ours. Our army had reference, not to the immediate fate of the army, but to the future operation of that army. It was a question not of immediate success to our own troops, but of the conquest of Mexico. This was in fact the question which the fate of his army must be decided for good or for evil within a short time. The Commanding General also informs us that he had, in virtue of authority reposed in him, called upon the States of Texas and Louisiana for 5000 men and he had authority to call upon several other States.

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[From the Knickerbocker.]

This image shows a vertical strip of aged, yellowed paper. The paper has a textured, slightly mottled appearance with some minor discoloration and small dark spots. A prominent dark, irregular border runs along the right edge, suggesting it might be a fragment from a larger document or a piece of tape. The overall tone is a warm, off-white or light beige.